**MINUTES**

**MONDAY 28 JUNE 2021**

**6.30pm**

**online, via Microsoft Teams**

**Councillors Present:** Gail Clapton (Treasurer), Abigail Cunningham, Sally Millar (Secretary), David Igoe, Andrew McKenzie, Teresa Perchard, Chrissie Reid, Jim Scanlon (Chair), Eileen Simpson, Michael Traill (Engagement Officer).

**Elected Representatives:** Councillor Adam McVey.

**In attendance:** Martyn Lings, Paul Matthews and Miles Wilkinson of CEC, andmembers of the public.

**Minute Taker:** Kay Goodall.

**1. Welcome, Apologies**

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Angus Hardie and Cllr Chas Booth.

**2. Adoption of Minutes of last meeting on Monday 31 May 2021**

Proposed by Chrissie Reid; seconded by Teresa Perchard. Available at <https://leithlinkscc.org.uk/>

**Matters Arising & Outstanding actions**

*Roadworks on Easter Road:* The roadworks at the foot of Easter Road are now gone, and the bus stop is open again. However, the one at the top of Easter Road has been out of commission since last year which means a very long walk, difficult for many.

*Temporary toilets on Leith Links:* this rented unit is planned to remain in place till end-Sept. Longer-term provision may be needed for the pandemic. It was hoped that the toilet supervisor would be collecting data on usage, to show how much needed this facility is. Signage to ‘advertise’ the toilets is needed. Concern was expressed for the welfare of the toilet supervisor, who has no shelter, and who may be expected to manage anti-social behaviour. It is also unfortunate that a diesel generator is needed

**ACTION: Cllr McVey will look into the questions of supervisor welfare and responsibility.**

**3. Presentation by Miles Wilkinson, Martyn Lings & Paul Matthews of the Active Travel Team,** **City of Edinburgh Council, on the subject of Leith Connections: Cycle route, and Leith Low Traffic Neighbourhood**

***(NB. Due to technical difficulties, the Minute taker may have missed few points made in the following section, if so, apologies.)***

The team repeated material presented previously. The context is the City Mobility Plan. The current proposal focuses on making sustainable modes of transport (walking, wheeling and cycling, buses and trams) safer and more attractive and on reducing vehicle dominance of the streets. Changes must however be inclusive and affordable. In Leith, the context is an already low vehicle ownership, and the need to fit in with the tram and bus services and the needs of emergency services. The LTN will interface with the cycle route.

Trial measures for consultation will be implemented in Nov-Dec 2021, and permanent implementation, if approved, is planned for summer/autumn 2023. The current engagement will run to 4 July 2021. Leaflets are being distributed to all addresses within the area and there have been business drop-ins to publicise the consultation. There will be two more public meetings on 1 and 6 July 2021.

In the previous public engagement (8 Feb-5 Mar 2021) the team received over 800 survey responses. “Safety of streets for cycling” was the most common barrier to active travel in the area. People felt traffic levels and traffic speeds were too high in many streets, particularly main thoroughfares and near primary schools. Walking and cycling conditions could be improved in several streets, such as those that linked to longer paths. The most popular area for creating new public space was Great Junction St.

The Edinburgh Street Design Guidance sets out classifications for streets ranging from quiet residential to strategic roads where it is unsafe for cyclists to mix with traffic, of which Leith has many. Some streets will move to local access only for motor vehicles while allowing deliveries, emergency access etc. Links Gardens is being re-opened for the period of the tram works, because of the pressure on surrounding roads, but there will be consultation on re-closure later.

The floor was then thrown open for comments, questions and discussion.

**Comments and questions**

*Evidence base:* there were several questions querying the validity of the evidence the team provided.

*Lack of transparency on Traffic data:* Councillors and members of the public commented that it is important to see all the data obtained from CEC’s monitoring, and to know when it was collected. New data is needed on East Hermitage Place etc. as this has been affected since the introduction of traffic lights at the foot of Easter Road and closure of Links Gardens. The slides and data presented were very dense and too small to read easily and should have been published in advance so they could be studied.

**ACTION: the team will circulate the slides and a summary of the data used for the study.**

*Absence / poor quality of online materials:* there is an incomplete legend for one of the maps, and it is not clear exactly what respondents can comment on. A fully integrated map and time scales (showing ALL the proposed developments eg. tram, CPZ, LTN and thus how they might interact) had been requested but this had not yet been provided. (Only time scales were provided, not a map.)

**ACTION: the team will look into clarifying the map and the description of the consultation online.**

*Inadequate leaflets:* Many people did not receive leaflets, and some earlier ones showed the wrong closure date for the consultation. LLCC have requested more to distribute but have not received them yet. The plans will have an impact on residents in neighbouring streets especially those around the perimeter of the LTN and they should also have been be consulted (they were last time). Furthermore, the leaflet is short and uninformative, even misleading, and is badly presented (inaccessible for those with visual difficulties).

**ACTION: the leaflets are with the print shop and will be sent to LLCC. These will show the amended closing date.**

*Extending consultation:* The team were asked to extend the consultation beyond the final public meeting, but they explained that they need time to analyse the responses.

**ACTION: the team will take this on board.**

*Lack of full consultation for the overarching proposals:* The view of LLCC is that the action is premature without fuller consultation and without people being able to see the impact of the all the other plans for the area such as the Controlled Parking Zone, Tram TRO etc..

As regards the CPZ, the team responded that the CPZ team had examined the LTN proposals and did not see a conflict: it will be advertised within the next month or so.

*Timing of data monitoring:* Concerns were expressed that the monitoring data is skewed by time of day: within the Links area, for instance, there are two schools and so there are both very busy and quite quiet periods. The team responded that the peak hours are the main focus, as that is when encouraging active travel is most important.

*Salamander Place:* account does not appear to have been taken of the hundreds of new dwellings being built here, and of the street’s already poor condition. The team responded that sufficient streets are expected to remain open to deal with this. The trial will also offer an opportunity to modify plans.

*Rushed trial:* The traffic data is mostly pre-2019, therefore not up-to-date, residents will be guinea pigs, and yet some proposals are already intended to be permanent. Also many affected groups, such as taxi drivers and delivery firms, are not aware of these plans. The team responded that the data is modelling data, looking to how the streets will look once the trams have gone in. The permanent measures will be subject to the TRO process.

*Infrastructure:* there are already too many homes in the area for the infrastructure available, with the population expanding further by thousands in the coming couple of years. What will be the role of the Car Club, bus services etc.? Have delivery service providers been contacted? Will guest house owners be able to obtain guest passes for visitors with cars?

*Links Gardens* - No through progress westwards is proposed, only use of Salamander Place. Concern was expressed as Salamander Place is already overloaded.

 **5. AOCB**

*Swift mural:* Katie O’Neill of the RSPB swift project is organising a festival. A mural is being painted at the Academy Lofts and there will be a public ‘opening’ at the end of July.

**ACTION: Abby will pass on the details to Michael for social media.**

*Climate Festival on 14August on the Links:* the Cricket Club has been contacted about this and the Festival has been advertised on Facebook, but there is no word from the Council and no-one has approached LLCC for its view.

Meeting ended at 8.30pm.

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**Date of next public meeting: Monday 30th August 2021, 6:30pm via Microsoft Teams**